



*New Haven Works  
Melissa Mason, Executive Director  
Jorge Perez, Chair*

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Dear Chairman Gomes, Chairman Tercyak, Senator Hwang, Representative Rutigliano, and members of the committee,

New Haven Works was founded as the result of an innovative partnership between the public and private sectors in 2012 to address the jobs crisis in the city of New Haven. New Haven Works is a non-profit that builds a talent supply of city residents for regional employers and prepares New Haven residents to compete in a very competitive job market. We provide employers with qualified, pre-screened local job applicants. Many of our candidates have already been referred to and have completed training and certification programs to help reduce the costs and length of the on-boarding process. They receive continued support once they are on the job to increase rates of retention, further reducing staffing costs.

I write in support of Raised Bill No. 40, AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYER INQUIRIES ABOUT AN EMPLOYEE'S OR PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE'S CREDIT HISTORY. Credit checks represent an unnecessary barrier to qualified applicants who, in coping with this hostile job market, have fallen behind in a few payments or stretched their credit cards a little too thin. Our Connecticut residents in those circumstances need jobs, not more barriers putting employment further out of reach. We are very excited and proud that, as of January 2016, our largest Partner Employer, Yale University, has dropped the credit check requirement for all positions, except those who have responsibility for financial transactions or the handling of cash valued at or in excess of \$50,000, or those working in restricted areas, which contain special University collections. Coupled with their recent commitment to hire 1,000 new employees from New Haven over the next three years, a policy change like this can help to put a city like to New Haven, which has suffered from endemic unemployment, on the path towards real economic recovery. SB 40 could help Connecticut residents achieve economic stability, and encourage other employers to hire applicants based on their skills and qualifications, not based on the damage done to their credit while struggling to find a job.

Thank you for considering this very necessary and potentially impactful legislation.

Melissa Mason,  
Executive Director  
New Haven Works

Cc:/ Senator Martin Looney  
Senator Gary Winfield  
Representative Toni Walker  
Representative Pat Dillon  
Representative Robert Megna  
Representative Juan Candelaria  
Representative Roland Lemar  
Representative Robyn Porter  
Representative Matthew Lesser

